



“I was given the keys to everything except five.”

*al-Sayyid Shaykh ‘Abdullāh al-Ghumārī*¹

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Ibn ‘Umar ؓ related that the Prophet ﷺ said,

***“I was given the keys to everything except five.
Verily the knowledge of the last hour is with Allāh ².”³***

In the two authentic books, Hudhayfa ؓ narrates that:

The Prophet ﷺ stood amongst us for a long time, he did not leave out anything that he described until the Day of Resurrection. Whoever remembered it, preserved it, whoever forgot it, lost it. I forgot some of it then I would see it and recall, like the face of an absent man, when you would see him you would know.

He said, “*I was given the keys to everything*,” meaning the known knowledge and everything unknown. Qādī ‘Iyād ؓ in al-Shifā’ in the chapter on ‘*What was given to him of the unseen and what will be*’ said:

The ahadīth in this chapter are like an ocean whose depth is not known nor abundance exhausted. This is one the most beautiful miracles known from conclusive reports that reached us by mass transmission, agreeing in meaning in the informing of the unseen.

Then he described more in his book so return to it. Tabarānī narrates that Ibn ‘Umar ؓ said that the Prophet ﷺ said, “*Truly Allāh displayed the world to me, so I gazed upon it and upon the creatures in them up until the Day of Judgement. It is as if I gazed at everything.*”

The Prophet ﷺ informed us of most of the conditions, we shall print a gracious epistle about this subject by the power of Allāh ﷻ.

¹ *al-ahadīth al-muntaqāt* pages 117-122.

² Sūrat Luqmān 31:34: *Verily the knowledge of the last hour is with Allāh, and He sends down the rain and He knows what is in the wombs; and no one knows what he shall earn on the morrow; and no one knows in what land he shall die; surely Allāh is Knowing, Aware.*

³ Narrated by Ahmad and Tabarānī with an authentic chain.

He said, "...except five, truly Allāh has the knowledge of the last hour." In Sahīh al-Bukhārī, Ibn `Umar ؓ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said,

The keys of the unseen include five that no one knows except Allāh, no one knows what is going to happen tomorrow except Allāh. No one knows what is in the wombs except Allāh. No one knows when the hour will be established except Allāh. No one knows in which land he will die except Allāh and no one knows when the rains will come except Allāh.

The consequence here is that he ﷺ didn't know the five, this is the opinion of the majority of scholars.

Yet, Imam al-Suyūṭī states in *khasā'is al-kubra*: "Some of them agreed that he was given the five knowledges as well, knowledge of the hour, the spirit, yet he remained silent."

This was affirmed by many of the later scholars, Imām Mansūr al-Baghdādī wrote on this subject and called it, 'Establishing testimony upon transmitted and rational proofs of the encompassing knowledge of our Prophet, ﷺ.' Shaykh Abū al-`Abbās Ahmad ibn `Abdul Hayy al-Halabī was asked this by `Abdul Mālik ibn Muhammad al-Tajmūshī, the judge of Tajmūsh, and he replied in a special epistle called, 'Essential request and the Halabī teachers answer.' He asserts that he ﷺ knew the five knowledges.

Sheikh Ahmad Ridā `Alī Khān al-Barelwī al-Hindī wrote on this subject three times: 'Filling the pocket with unseen knowledge,' 'The hidden pearls in the knowledge of the one who gave good tidings of what was and what will be' and 'The informing the secret and unknown of the chosen one.'

`Allāmah Abū `Abdullāh Muhammad al-Habīb ibn `Abdul Qādir al-Sajalmāsiya al-Hasanī stated in *sharh manzūmat al-sammā al-bassanī lil-hilāl*:

It necessary for us to believe that he ﷺ, did not leave the world except that he obtained all the knowledges as in the authentic narration: "I was given the keys to everything and all things were revealed to me.

Whatever was mentioned in disagreement of the previous narration is abrogated. Thus, his uniqueness and superiority is established in terms of knowledge, over all the Prophets ﷺ with regard to the knowledge of the unseen given to them as stated in the Ayah: "***The Knower of the unseen! So He does not reveal His secrets to any, Except to him whom He chooses as a messenger.***" ⁴ Some exegetes have said that this refers to the Prophets and the Saints, and that there is omission here, because the Saint is the inheritor of Prophetic knowledge.

In the 'Elucidation of the Models of the Beloved' of `Allāmah Shamsuddīn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn `Umar al-Rawḍī al-Mālikī mentioned, "It is correct what the authorities say, that he was given the knowledge of everything even the five including the knowledge of the soul and remained quiet."

Likewise it is mentioned by the author in the explanation the *janbar al-laqqānī* and the explanation of 'al-Nawawī's forty Hadīths' by al-Shabarkhītī and others. In Munāwī's

⁴ Sūrat al-Jinn 72.26

exposition of *al-jami`a al-saghīr* called *fa'id al-qadīr*, about the tradition of the five knowledges that Allāh only knows it says: “The five that only Allāh knows, in component and in entirety, as a whole and in part.”

There is no denial that Allāh allows some of his elite from the general populace, unseen knowledge from these five because they are finite and limited, although the Mu'taziltes have objections.⁵ That which is considered and leaning to that the Prophet ﷺ did not leave the world until he knew these five, in that he was not raised in knowledge every day, but every moment and the generality of the narrations have indicated this. From these is a tradition in Bukhārī narrated by Asmā bint Abū Bakr who narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “*There is nothing that I have not seen from this place of mine, even Heaven and hell.*” This was part of a speech delivered in Medina.

In a tradition narrated by Samūra, the sun came up and the Prophet ﷺ prayed then he said, “*I swear by Allāh, that I saw, when I stood and then prayed, everything that will confront you of your worldly and heavenly affairs.*”⁶

This is not negated by the narration of ‘*except five*’ because it was before he was taught these and then he was then taught it after that. And this is as was [initially] prohibited to prefer him to Mūsā, Yūnus, Ibrāhīm (*peace be on them*) and then he mentioned that he is the best of the Prophets, and he rebuked one who called him ‘*Sayyid*’ saying “*the (only) Sayyid is Allāh*”, and then he narrated he is the Sayyid of the children of Adam, and Allāh ﷻ instructed him in the Qur’ān to say to the disbelievers: “***I had no knowledge of the Highest Chiefs when they disputed.***”⁷ Then Allāh informed him what they disputed about. Thus, in a tradition narrated by Ibn `Abbās, Mu`adh and others that the Prophet ﷺ said,

I have seen my Lord in the most wonderful of forms. Allāh said, “Oh Muhammad.” I said, “I am at your service and disposal.” “Do you know what the highest chiefs were disputing over?” I said, “I do not know, oh Lord.” Then he put his hand between my shoulder blades until I felt coolness in my chest, then everything was revealed to me and I knew.

This is an authentic Hadīth mentioned in Sunan al-Tirmidhī, Musnad Ahmad, and others by various chains. This tradition is spoken about in *qam‘ al-asbrār `an jarimat al-intibār*, published with *al-arba‘ūn al-ghumārīyya* and Ibn Rajab commented on it in a published volume called *ikhtiyār al-awlā fī sharhī hadīth ikhtisām al-malā’ al-a‘lā*.

This narration is one of the proofs that he had knowledge of the five because he said, “*Everything was revealed to me.*” Khudhayfa said in a narration that “*The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ stood amongst us for a long time and did not leave out anything up until the Day of Judgement*”, in other words, tribulations, events and other things not mentioned in the narration. Similarly `Umar ؓ said, “*The Prophet ﷺ stood amongst us for a long time and informed about the*

⁵ The Mu`ataziltes denied that knowledge of the unseen could be given to a Prophet or Saint.

⁶ Authentic narration from Ahmad and others.

⁷ Sūrat Sād 38.69. The Ayah is in reference to the angels disputing when Adam was about to be sent to earth as a Caliph.

beginning of creation until I forgot.”⁸ Abū Darr said, “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ left us and not a bird’s wings flapped in the sky except that he informed us of it.”⁹

And Allāh knows best.



⁸ Bukhārī and Tabarānī

⁹ Authentic narration in Ahmad, Tabarānī. Abū al-Dardā’ narrated it in Abu Ya’lā, al-Tabarānī and others.